

Real Estate Roundup

Fall Fix Ups Whether You're Selling or Not - By Dan Rath

Most of us know the best time to plant grass seed is in the fall. We don't always see the immediate results, but, come spring you've gone a long way to establishing a healthy and vibrant lawn.

The care of your home in any real estate market is very similar. What you do now will pay dividends if you choose to sell in 6 months. If you don't sell, you've reaped the benefits of timely and necessary maintenance and improvements.

Here are 10 items to consider for fall projects.

REPAIRS: What needs fixing? Inside or outside, now is the time to take care of it. Is the doorbell broken, a slat in the fence, a bathroom fan? The cold weather could exaggerate the problem.

PAINT: Cooler temperatures make for easier painting of your peeling window frames or that spare bedroom that's currently pink. Don't overlook giving a face lift to your interior door frames and shoe molding.

SMOKE DETECTORS: Check your smoke detectors. Be sure they have fresh batteries and that the test button functions properly.

HVAC VENTS: When's the last time you changed your furnace filter or cleaned the heating and cooling ductwork? If you have pets or someone in the family has a sensitive nose it might be worth considering a professional to clean the duct work.

WEATHER PROOFING: Check the weather-stripping around the doors to your home. If they are cracking or torn, replace them, in some cases you might have to add some.

How is the insulation in your attic? Be sure it is adequate.

ROOFING: Did the summer inflict any damage to your roof? Be sure none of the shingles have come loose or are missing. While you are at it, check the flashing and sealant around skylights, vents and chimneys.

GUTTERS: Clear your gutters and downspouts of the debris that has been caught all season. Leaves, pine needles and branches can cause poor drainage which often leads to water backing up under your roof and into the house or, often soaks your home's foundation.

FIREPLACE: With the cold weather around the corner you will soon be lighting your fireplace. If is gas operated and has been turned off all summer you may have to clean

the line for proper gas flow. For all chimneys check the flue for necessary cleaning or hire a professional. Clean the firebox and be sure doors and screens work properly. **EXTERIOR WATER FAUCETS AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS.** Even in the south we get a deep enough freeze to burst water pipes. If you have a lawn irrigation system consider having it drained and winterized. At minimum be sure to disconnect all hoses and equipment for exterior water faucets and if possible, shut off water supply to them. **YARD WORK:** Many plants require pruning this time of year, and lawns should be re-seeded or fertilized with a fall/winter fertilizer to feed them through the winter and get them ready for a fast green-up when spring returns.

So, when someone says the 'grass is always greener in someone else's yard', you know they are talking about your grass. You can never go wrong with green grass whether you're trying to create curb appeal to sell your home, or, just want to enjoy a lush lawn for season ahead.